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The Book that Made Walther a Minister

By the REV. PAUL H. BURGDORF, Clinton, Iowa

Dr. C. F. W. Walther, who was to become so important to the Lutheran Church in America and indeed to all of Lutheranism in these latter times, had originally not intended to study theology at all. During his last year at high school, on February 8, 1929, at which time he was seventeen years old, we find him writing in his diary: "I feel that I am born for nothing but music."¹ But when he on occasion confided to his father his desire to devote himself to music, his father said to him: "If you want to become a musician, you will have to see for yourself how you can manage it; but if you want to study theology, I shall give you a thaler² a week." By September 23 Walther had completed his high-school studies and returned to his parental home for a brief vacation before matriculating at the University of Leipzig in October of

1) Not medicine, as is stated in the introduction to the Pilger edition of Schubert's *Oberlin*. M. Guenther, in his *Dr. C. F. W. Walther: Lebensbild* has indicated this correction. It is the latter book, largely retold in Professor Polack's *The Story of C. F. W. Walther*, which has especially been drawn on for the present introductory remarks.

2) A German silver coin, worth three marks, or 71.4 cents.

the same year. His elder brother, Otto Herman, who had already completed two years of study at Leipzig, when he came home for these vacation days, had brought home with him, besides a number of other Christian tracts, an account of the life of Jean Frederic Oberlin, a man who had died three years previously and whose remarkable career had called forth the admiration of the Christian world. It was the reading of this little book that decided Walther for a Christian ministerial career. In his diary he wrote at that time: "I am living quite happily and philosophize with my brother about the most interesting events of our lives, and I am reading with real eagerness the account of the life of Pastor Oberlin by Schubert. This has taken possession of my whole being and has shown me that the prospects which a theologian can have are the finest, because he can, if he only will, gain for himself a field of activity such as no one who has chosen another calling may hope for."

Certainly this book, which proved so significant in the decision of Walther's career, ought to interest us.³⁾ It should no doubt prove inviting to become familiar with at least a portion of the life story of Oberlin, as told by Schubert, which so affected the life of our own Dr. Walther.

The scene of activity in the life of Jean Frederic Oberlin is laid in the desolate Steintal region of the Vosges Mountains in Alsace, on the border that separates France from Germany, a region there inhabited by a lazy, vicious people, half dullards and half brigands, who were, however, to be transformed by the labors of good Father Oberlin into a thriving community of exemplary Christians. It was here, at Ban de la Roche, that the great Lutheran divine spent his entire ministerial life. Although those who had as much as seen a Bible were the exception among them, — and they had but a rudimentary knowledge of fundamental Christian truth, and dissension and discontent reigned everywhere, — yet the inhabitants of those miserable huts called themselves Christians of the Augsburg Confession. "Their community," says Schubert, "during the course of three successive generations shows more strikingly than any other region known to me what great harm may be done by worthless pastors and how useful a good, true, well-meaning pastor may be."

One of the last divines who served there before Oberlin was,

3) Dr. G. H. Schubert, *Zuege aus dem Leben von Johann Friedrich Oberlin*, Pilger Buchhandlung, Reading, Pa. The present paragraphs have been reproduced from this book.

among other things, such an ardent hunter that on one occasion when he had been called to minister to a sick parishioner and he spied a rabbit near the road on the way, he turned back and got his fowling-piece, remarking, that the patient could not escape him but the rabbit could. Fondness for the chase and for brandy-drinking were the only new things the poor Steintalers learned from a number of their pastors. Indeed, Schubert comes to the conclusion that the divines who were to proclaim the Gospel to the poor inhabitants of this valley in the first half of the previous century were — this, alas, is too certain — destroyers instead of rescuers of souls.

There was to be one exception, even before Oberlin took over the conduct of affairs in the Steintal. A noble candidate of theology, named Johann Stuber, impelled by an apostolic spirit and an ardent love of his brethren, came into the Steintal region in 1750 and labored there for six years. And when he was again succeeded by an unworthy pastor, he announced at the first opportunity (when his successor was promoted to another place, four years later) his willingness to give up his more advantageous city parish because of his love and constant longing for the poor, neglected Steintal wilderness. In 1760, therefore, he once more moved into the Steintal amid much general rejoicing. It was during this second period of Stuber's activity in the Steintal that his most blessed work was done.

He found the hog-raising Steintalers, like true Gergesenes, in a state in which they, neither feeling nor suspecting any greater want, would no doubt just as soon have driven the messenger of peace from their borders, as the Gergesenes did the Savior.

The Steintalers had hitherto known nothing else of the Bible than that it was a large book supposed to contain God's Word. Even one of their best school-teachers, during his twenty years of office in their midst, had had no Bible in his home. What the Old and the New Testament were, what a book, a chapter, a verse was, they did not know at all. Stuber familiarized them with the Bible and sought to explain it to them in every possible way. He always impressed upon them the simple truth: "You want to become a people of God."

On the day following his arrival in Waldbach the village in which the parsonage of his parish was located, he visited the village school. "Well, where is your schoolmaster?" he asked when he found the children of the village in a dirty room of a miserable hut talking loudly with one another and screaming

confusedly. The children pointed to a little old man who lay helpless in a bed. "Are you the schoolmaster?" he was asked by the pastor. "Yes, sir," the little old man answered. "What, then, do you teach your children?" "Nothing, Pastor." "Ah, why not?" "Because I know nothing myself." "But how, then, did you become schoolmaster?" "I really used to be the swineherd. But since I became too feeble, the congregation dismissed me, and I am now to watch the children." The schools in the other villages belonging to the parish were in a similar condition.

It is interesting to note how Stuber concerned himself with training efficient teachers in the parish, particularly since, in view of the fact that the office of a teacher was generally regarded below the level of a swineherd, parents were not willing to give up their more gifted sons, on whom Stuber had an eye for this work. "I do not mean," he said, "that your sons are to become ordinary school-teachers; no, that would not do. But I want to make of them schoolmasters." Immediately several young men wanted to become schoolmasters. Also the manner in which Stuber provided for school-buildings is a most interesting story; but its telling would lead us too far afield.

When this faithful pastor finally received a call to Strassburg as the pastor of St. Thomas's Church, he felt he could follow it with a good conscience because his call to this charge implied that he himself would have an opportunity to select as his successor a truly pious candidate, filled with divine earnestness and zeal.

Stuber's successor, called upon his recommendation, was Jean Frederic Oberlin, who was born at Strassburg in 1740. Passing over the story of this man's ancestry, early life, and interesting marriage, we shall pause only to say that his one determination in life was to serve the will of God. From childhood on his constant prayer was: "Lord, speak, for Thy servant heareth. O God, teach me to do Thy will." His dying prayer was: "Thy will be done." Oberlin was 27 years old when, on March 30, 1767, he assumed the duties of pastor at Waldbach. He was to serve here until 1826 — fifty-nine long years, until at the age of 86 years his Lord was to take from his weary hand the shepherd's staff.

The general attitude of the Steintalers toward their pastor was at first one of the most passionate and stubborn opposition, especially as regards his efforts toward improvement of their material circumstances, in respect to which one should suppose they would most easily have recognized his good intentions in their behalf.

His good suggestions were labeled innovations and unnecessary faultfinding. At that time it was the way of the Steintalers, when in a battle of words they could make no more headway by use of the tongue, to finish the fray with their fists, in which way they usually won the day over their verbally more accomplished opponents. Also their pastor was for them not above being shown once, as they thought, with the fist that over against all his weightier verbal reasoning they still had the better of the argument. A number of them therefore one day conceived the plan to lie in wait for him at a secluded spot and beat him up. The pastor was secretly given knowledge of these intentions. For the execution of this plot a Sunday had been decided on. Oberlin chose as a text for his sermon on this day Matt. 5:39: "But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil; but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also." Whereupon he spoke of the Christian patience with which one should suffer injustice and insult. After the service the disgruntled ones met at the home of one of their acquaintances and laughed about their pastor because he would now soon demonstrate whether he could himself practice what he preached. Then the door opened, and the parson stepped in among them. "Here I am, my friends," he said with a composure that commanded respect. "Your intention is known to me; if I have really transgressed what I have taught and preached to you, then punish me. Here I am, for I should very much like to spare you the baseness of secretly waylaying me." The boors, quietly and deeply ashamed, came to the parson one by one, gave him their hand, and begged his forgiveness. On another occasion it was announced to him that a number of young folks at one of his preaching-stations planned to seize him as on the next Sunday he was to return from their church to Waldbach and cool his burning ambitions by dipping him into a water trough. Oberlin found occasion in his sermon to speak of the special divine protection which those always enjoy who constantly walk in His sight. Hereupon he declared that the plans of his antagonists were known to him, but without the will of the Lord they could not touch one hair of his head. On another occasion, he said, it was his custom to ride home, but this time he was intentionally going afoot and having his horse led after him. Several people who were handy with their fists actually did stand along his way, ready to attack him, but he went by them with a quiet greeting, and they did not dare to lay a hand on him.

In endeavoring to win for Christ and keep with Christ the souls entrusted to his care, Oberlin's first concern was to pray and intercede daily with God for them at the throne of grace. Every quarter hour which could be spared in the multitude of his pressing duties Oberlin employed in bending his knees before Him who alone can give strength and love and unconditional surrender in His service. It was his peculiar custom to pray for every individual member of his parish, one after another, and with this in mind he scanned his church records every morning in order to be reminded of the respective need of each one of them.

It was edifying just to step into Oberlin's parsonage. There was hardly a place in the house where some instructive motto, nicely written, did not catch the eye. Also in this way Oberlin sought to influence his people. He organized a Bible society at Waldbach, which distributed the Scriptures in thousands of copies in the Steintal region. He created a library, which circulated books in the various villages under his care; yes, he himself even had a number of books published for this purpose. Naturally the children's schools in his parochial district not only were given the attention and care to which they were entitled, but he also instituted nursery and kindergarten training-classes. He organized a mission society, which interested itself especially in the lot of the unfortunate slaves of the Antilles Islands; he always sought to induce the members of his congregations to offer a tithe of their income to the Lord for benevolent purposes.

Beside the real work of his calling, that of ministering spiritually to his people, Oberlin was also concerned about the improvement of their material circumstances. When he came to the Steintal region, its farmlands were almost wholly depleted. Besides native apples of poor quality, on which their half-starved pigs fed, the only thing the inhabitants raised was potatoes, which yielded so poorly that theirs was a mere pitiful subsistence. They never thought of blaming their methods of agriculture, however, for this state of affairs, but merely believed that their fields had lost their fertility. Oberlin sought to instruct his people in the rudiments of agriculture, and when they refused to listen, he convinced them by his own achievements. He set out fruit- and nut-trees and planted corn and other fields crops, properly cultivating them. When his parishioners expressed their amazement at the sharp contrast between his fine products and their own poor fields and asked him how he had managed to obtain such splendid results from such

poor soil, he told them that every good and perfect gift must come from above, but that at the same time much also depends on our own industry and skill. He instructed them in the fertilization of the soil and so improved both the quality and the quantity of their potatoes that their product was prized above all others on the market. He also taught them to raise fruit-trees and field crops, graded cattle, and wool. Under his direction they drained swamps and planted meadows, built better homes and barns, introduced methods of sanitation, and improved their living conditions generally. He induced them to build roads and construct bridges in order to secure a better market and to establish contact with the world beyond their valley; by selecting the most promising young men among them and putting them to a trade, he made them independent of larger distant centers. He also issued an annual almanac to extend his influence among them. The result of all this was that their material lot was soon vastly improved, so that there was no longer even a single native beggar in the whole of the Steintal region.

Oberlin also carried on an extensive correspondence, especially with those of higher rank. Excerpts from a remarkable letter written to a lady who had turned to him in distress are contained in Schubert's biographical sketch and can especially serve to characterize this side of Oberlin's life.

A most appealing chapter in Oberlin's biography is that of the period of the French Revolution (1789—1802). But that, too, is a story in itself, which we cannot begin to tell.

At one time, during his earlier years, Oberlin almost went to America. He had heard of a German congregation in America which was in need of a pastor and had been told that no one was to be found for that distant place. He and his faithful wife were ready to volunteer; however, the outbreak of the American War of Independence caused these plans to come to naught.

Oberlin's outstanding services to the Steintal region were formally acknowledged by the award of the gold medal of the Royal Central Agricultural Society in Paris on the fiftieth anniversary of his activities, which had transformed a once desolate region into a delightful garden spot. A few years before his death he also was decorated by the Order of the Legion of Honor. His name was spoken with reverence throughout France, Germany, Switzerland, and even in Russia. When he died, in 1826, he was mourned as the patriarch of his people, in a funeral which was a testimonial

of the regard and reverence in which he was held and a demonstration of esteem such as is seldom found. But most of all did the works which he left behind acclaim his greatness.

No doubt there was much in the experiences of Oberlin in the Steintal region of the Vosges Mountains in Alsace that was to be paralleled by the experiences awaiting Walther in the primitive backwoods of Perry County, Missouri, in 1839 and the years following. The instruction and encouragement which Walther derived from his knowledge of these experiences were to stand him in good stead in due time. Surely

God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform.

What if Walther had never read this little book?

Reminiscences of the Seminary at St. Louis 1881 to 1884

By OTTO F. HATTSTAEDT, D. D., Milwaukee, Wis.

In the last number of the CONCORDIA HISTORICAL INSTITUTE QUARTERLY Dr. Th. Buenger published an interesting article on the Seminary from 1879 to 1882. This article has suggested the present one, which covers the years 1881 to 1884 and which may serve as a continuation of Dr. Buenger's article. As the years 1881 to 1884 were undoubtedly the most momentous in the history of the Seminary, it is surely worth while to recall the important events that happened in that time.

The class to which the writer belonged and which graduated in Fort Wayne in July, 1881, was the last one to take up its abode in the old seminary building in St. Louis. When we entered it in September, 1881, serious thoughts came to our minds, considering the fact that it was soon to be torn down, as the Synod had about four months before resolved to erect a new building. The old seminary was now, in its completed state, twenty-three years old. The south wing was erected in 1850, the north wing two years later, and the middle section in 1858. The outward appearance was by no means uncomely, but the inner arrangement was poor, as the whole building was not uniformly planned. The basement contained the dining-hall, the kitchen, and the lavatory for the students, the entire first floor of the middle part was the *aula*, with the old organ, which since 1842 had served Trinity Congrega-

tion in its new church and which I had the honor to play in the morning devotions. On the first and second floors of the wings there were living-rooms for the students, and on the third floor of the entire building were the dormitories, although some students found their sleeping quarters in other places, for instance, on the gallery of the *aula*, where from their beds they could say "*Hier*" when at the roll-call in the morning devotions their names were read. I, together with five comrades, occupied the *Durchgangszimmer*, which was situated above the *aula* and which was the only way to reach the north wing from the south, and *vice versa*. It was quite annoying when so many students tramped through the room, until a formal protest put a stop to it, at least to some extent.

In the old seminary building we spent our happiest days in St. Louis. It was, what we Germans call, *so gemuetlich*, and though the floors were outworn and the plaster came off in many places, what did it matter? Suffice it to say that no complaints were ever heard. We kept our room in a fairly good condition, and even the stove — all rooms were heated by stoves — received the necessary attention. But in the room to the south of us there was no sense of orderliness and cleanliness. Once Dr. Walther came around for inspection. When he entered that room, he with a stern face said, "*Wenn Sie keinen Besen haben, so kann ich Ihnen eine Schaufel borgen.*" That was a reminder! Some time afterwards, when one of the inmates one morning stretched out his arms with a jerk, the stove collapsed. The merriment of the other students was great.

St. Louis was at that time a city of about 350,000 inhabitants. The western city limits were on Grand Avenue, a miserable mud-road. Forest Park, now so beautiful, was designated as a future park, but was then a veritable wilderness. Lafayette, Benton, and Tower Grove parks were the only places of recreation of the people of St. Louis. To the west of Holy Cross Church, one half block from the seminary, there were only a few scattered farmhouses, and not a single street up to Grand Avenue was laid out. Jefferson Avenue reached only to Pestalozzi Street, as it was interrupted by a deep gully, which reached to Lafayette Street. Therefore the mule-driven street-cars of Jefferson Avenue turned east on Pestalozzi street. They brought us to town in three quarters of an hour. The Rev. H. Bartels's church to the west of the seminary was so far out of town that only few students ventured to go there, as Chippewa, the only street to the west, was in a bad condition.

To reach Bremen or Baden, northern suburbs of St. Louis, took us at least one and a half hours. The Union Railway Station was an insignificant wooden structure. To reach it from the east, the trains, after having crossed the Eads Bridge, had to run through a long tunnel. Now compare this with what St. Louis is now. Yes, St. Louis was a different city from what it is now, Greater St. Louis having now far over a million inhabitants.

Most students were quartered in Holy Cross and Trinity congregations; and how lovingly they were entertained by our good people! Indeed, if there ever was a fine relation between students and their "wash-folks," their benefactors, it was here in St. Louis. I will never forget the splendid hospitality which for three years I enjoyed in the home of Louis Lange, Jr. In passing, I will say that, like Dr. Buenger, I found my dear wife amongst the daughters of the city of St. Ludovic.

The only sad experience we had was when in October, 1881, a student slashed his throat with a razor. He was missed for three days, when finally his body was found under the staircase of the central portion of the seminary, close to the dining-hall. Could a greater sorrow befall Dr. Walther than this deplorable occurrence? But it had this good effect on us students, that we prayed instantly that God would preserve us from the temptations of Satan.

Our stay at St. Louis was a memorable one for two reasons. In the first place, the controversy concerning the election of the children of God was then raging in all its fury. Already in Fort Wayne we became interested in this matter, when Professor Stelhorn left us early in 1881 to go to Columbus in order to join the opposing forces. Of course, we had no clear conception of the doctrine of election, and finally the sainted Professor Bischoff explained it to us in about this way: "Hier sind zwei Tabakspfeifen. Die eine ist haeszlich und hat keine Spitze. Die andere ist schoen und hat eine Spitze. Nehme ich nun die erstere, die haeszliche, reinige sie und versehe sie mit einer Spitze, so ist damit die Lehre der Missouri-synode gekennzeichnet, die da sagt, dasz uns Gott infolge der Wahl den Glauben schenkt und uns angenehm und herrlich macht. Nehme ich aber die andere, gerade um ihrer schoenen Spitze willen, so wird damit die Lehre unserer Gegner gekennzeichnet, die da behaupten, dasz uns Gott um des Glaubens willen erwaeht habe. Unsere Lehre ist Lehre der Heiligen Schrift, die Lehre der Gegner aber nicht." This was indeed only a crude explanation of the difference between the two opposing forces, but it was to the point,

and indelibly it stuck in our minds. Coming to St. Louis, we were prepared to follow the activities on both sides. And with what interest we studied the articles of Dr. Walther and other men of our Synod! We simply devoured all the articles in *Lehre und Wehre* and in the *Lutheraner*. The doctrine of election overshadowed all other branches of study. Especially must I mention the brilliant lectures of Dr. Walther in the *Lutherstunde*, in which for two years he instructed us in the doctrine of election and conversion, the final test of Lutheran theology. And oh, the undeserved mercy of God that not the slightest discord existed between Walther and his colleagues, Pieper, Schaller, Guenther, Lange, Stoeckhardt! They all stood up with one accord for the written Word. They have long ago gone to their heavenly reward, but their work will remain. Forever will the *Schriftbeweis* from the pen of Dr. Stoeckhardt, which did so much to clear the air, remain a theological monument of the first order. And even the young Dr. Pieper excelled in excellent work. My sainted father told me how he enjoyed his articles and said, *Was der schreibt, das hat Hand und Fuss*. Now very little is said about the doctrine of election, and men of the Ohio and Iowa synods have definitely declared that the doctrine of *intuitu fidei* could not be upheld. All students, with one lonely exception (H. D.), were fully convinced of the wrong position of the opponents and remained loyal Missourians.

In the second place, our stay at St. Louis was a memorable one because we were permitted to witness the erection of the new seminary building. When in May, 1882, we looked upon the dear old seminary for the last time, we could not suppress a feeling of deep sorrow in our hearts. How intimately it was connected with the history of our Synod! How many remembrances were linked to it! How brightly it shone at that time as the only truly Lutheran institution in the country in spite of its insignificant outward appearance! Now it was to be torn down, and it was gone when we arrived again in September, 1882, and the foundation of the new building had already been laid. October 1 the corner-stone-laying took place with appropriate ceremonies, and then the walls went up higher and higher, until they were finished about the end of February, 1883. Then the roof was built, the windows were set in, and the finishing of the interior was begun. An incident which might have been disastrous to me happened about the middle of April. The supper-bell had rung, and I passed the building. A storm had come up, and, lo, suddenly lightning struck the north-

west corner, and a huge stone block crashed down three feet ahead of me. I was stunned but soon regained consciousness, thanking God that He had so graciously spared me. Finally in August the structure was finished, a grand and beautiful monument to the generosity of our people.

But where were the students during this whole year of intermission? For the greater part they were housed in the large old Lange residence, which stood on Potomac Avenue on the site of the present Lutheran Hospital. Others found lodging with families, still others stayed somewhere else. The dining-hall was on the first floor of the old *Synodaldruckerei* on Jefferson Avenue, and on the second floor were two recitation-rooms. The third one was in the residence of Prof. Rud. Lange. It is evident that in consequence of this arrangement many hardships had to be endured, especially in the cold winter months. But the time passed by without any untoward happenings, and we were glad when the "interim" was over and we could go home.

On the 9th and 10th of September, 1883, the dedication of the new seminary took place. This was a grand affair. The weather was perfect, and about 15,000 persons had gathered in front of the building to thank God for His blessings. Two fine services were held, and in the evening the seminary was beautifully illuminated by means of candles. On the following day again two services were held, and in the afternoon the writer had the honor of delivering a speech of about a half hour's duration. The theme of this oration was "A Comparison between the Wittenberg University and Our Concordia Seminary."

Now we students were housed in the beautiful, stately new building, we, together with the two lower classes, being the first to make it our home. But we who had lived a whole year in the dear old seminary building could only reluctantly accommodate ourselves to the new conditions, because the utmost care had to be taken not to do even the slightest damage. Besides, for the most time in winter the building was cold, as it took too much coal to heat it. In short, our stay in the new seminary was not so pleasant as we thought it would be. But we had the satisfaction of having lived a year in this monumental structure, in which true Lutheran theology had its home in all its purity just as in the old one. Now even this building is no more, and where it stood, there is now an Atlantic and Pacific grocery store. Nothing remained of it, and the present Concordia Seminary found its new home in the western part of the city. God bless it forever and evermore!

Thirty Years of Home Mission Work in the Rocky Mountain Country

By REV. HENRY T. RAUH, Billings, Mont.

I

While pursuing my theological studies in St. Louis from the fall of 1879 to the spring of 1882, I had a presentiment that to me would be assigned a position in the Home Mission field of our Synod either on the Great Western Plains or in the Rocky Mountain country. Not that I had any particular desire for work in that part of the vineyard of the Lord, nor that I considered myself fit to be a missionary; neither of the two was the case with me. In fact, I felt unworthy and unfit to work in any part of the kingdom of Christ, and that feeling has not left me to this day.

The idea of being sent into the great Western mission-field disappeared from my mind completely, when on February 13, 1882, I was informed that I had been called by two old congregations near Sugar Grove, Ohio, 50 miles from my home town, Zanesville. One month later, on March 13, I was graduated together with two other young men, one being the Rev. Henry Frincke, at one time pastor of our congregation in Monroe, Michigan, and the other the Rev. F. W. Herzberger, for many years city missionary in St. Louis. We three left the night of the same day, Pastor Frincke being sent 500 miles northwest, to Lincoln, Nebraska; Pastor Herzberger 500 miles south, as missionary near Little Rock, Arkansas; and I 500 miles east, to Ohio. We three have not been together at the same time since.

I was ordained and installed at Sugar Grove by the Rev. C. A. Frank of Zanesville on March 26, thirteen days after my graduation. I served my two congregations near Sugar Grove 4½ years, preaching both in the German and in the English language. During the last year of my work there an old ailment, liver complaint, which had taken hold of me in Fort Wayne, Indiana, while a student there and which I was never entirely rid of, became more aggravated and made it necessary for me to place myself under the care of our family physician, who, after having treated me for a number of months without being able to affect a cure, told me that only a great change in climate would do me any good. Taking his advice, I reported my condition to the President of the Central District of our Synod and made the necessary application for a transfer, expecting to be called to Canada. In the month of June, 1886, how-

ever, I received, to my great surprise, a call to our mission-congregation in Denver, Colorado, and accepted it in July.

On August 1 I preached my farewell sermon in Ohio. A few days later my wife and I went to Lancaster, Ohio, to spend a few days with her parents and other relatives, then to Zanesville for a week with my parents and friends and old schoolmates; then, about August 18, we left for the West. We made a stop of a few days in St. Louis, where some well-meaning friends in all seriousness advised the purchase of a gun for protection in the wild and uncivilized West, as they called it, which advice, however, was not heeded. Another stop was made at Kansas City at the special request of the Rev. E. Jehn, who was pastor of our congregation in that city at that time and who in 1880 had been assistant to the Rev. Henry Craemer in Zanesville. In the morning of August 26 we left Kansas City for Denver, traveling via the Union Pacific through the Sunflower State and arriving in the Queen City of the Plains, as Denver was called at that time, the next morning at 7:15 at an altitude of one mile above the sea. On our arrival we naturally looked to the west to see the mountains. But they were not visible. It had rained the previous night, and the clouds still enveloped the entire mountain range. But about the noon hour the clouds disappeared, and the Rocky Mountains presented themselves to our view in their full gorgeous snow-white majesty. For whenever at that time of the year it rains on the plains and in the lowlands, it snows in the mountains. The grandeur of the mountain scenery cannot be described in words but can only be appreciated when seen by the human eye.

The mountains in Colorado rise to a height of 14,000 feet and more above sea-level. Fifteen miles west of Denver are the so-called foot-hills, which vary from 400 to 2,000 feet higher than Denver. Between the foot-hills and the snowy range are various ranges and peaks, which increase in height the further west one goes, until the snowy range is reached. The snowy range extends for 150 miles from north to south, from beyond Long's Peak in the north to Pike's Peak in the south, Denver lying 50 miles due east of the center of this range. In the winter-time in a bright moonlight night, when the mountains are all covered with snow, they appear to be so close to the city that one imagines they are at the end of one of the streets running east and west through Denver. Even in daytime when the sky is cloudless, which is the case about 300

days in the year, Pike's Peak, 75 miles south of Denver, seems to be but two or three miles away.

This reminds me of a man from Omaha, a member of one of our churches in that city, who, with his son, in the summer of 1887 took a trip to Denver and put up at the Western Hotel. It was on a Saturday that he arrived. On that day he inquired of me where our church was and learned that our services begin at 11 A. M. On Sunday morning he and his son arose about 5 o'clock and asked the hotel clerk how far those first mountains were from the city. The clerk said: "Between 15 and 16 miles," whereupon the visitor said: "I do not mean those snow-capped peaks but those first low mountains." The clerk rejoined: "As I told you, those first mountains are at least 15 miles from here; the snow-capped peaks are 50 miles away." But the man from Omaha, thinking the clerk was making a fool of him, started off in anger with his son and expected to reach the foot-hills and return to the hotel before breakfast. At about 11:30, just as I had begun to preach, I saw him and his son enter the church, all red in their faces. They did not tell me why they had come late. A few days afterwards the hotel clerk informed me of their attempt to walk to the foot-hills and back before breakfast.

The distances in Colorado because of the rare, clear, dry atmosphere are very deceiving. The reader has possibly heard of the Irishman who went to Colorado from his home in the far East and who soon became aware of the fact just mentioned. One day, when he took a walk over a portion of irrigated land, he came to an irrigation ditch about $2\frac{1}{2}$ feet wide. He began to undress, when the farmer to whom the land belonged approached him and asked him what he meant by undressing. The Irishman replied: "My dear man, this ditch seems to be not very wide; but distances out here are so deceiving that I thought this ditch might be a river, and I thought I would take no chances and try to jump over it but cross it by swimming." But to return to my story.

On August 27 my wife and I reached Denver. Two days later I was installed. The members of the congregation thought it strange that the Mission Board should have had them call a sickly man to be their minister; but by the grace of God the condition of my health began to improve almost immediately, and the people of my charge soon dismissed from their minds the misgivings that had troubled them.

II

My call to Denver made it my duty to serve not only the congregation there, which at that time had a small frame church on Arapahoe Street, 22×46, but no parsonage and was not yet self-supporting, but also to do mission-work in other parts of the State as much as possible. At that time there were but two Lutheran ministers of our Synod in the State, the Rev. Henry J. Mueller in the Wet Mountain Valley, at the foot of Sierra Blanca, with the highest mountain peak in Colorado, 200 miles southwest of Denver. He was pastor of our congregation there, the members of which had come from Chicago in 1870 or 1871 and established a German colony in the aforesaid valley 7,000 feet above the level of the sea. They called the settlement Colfax, also Blumenau. Pastor Mueller had 40 miles to the nearest railroad-station and could for that reason not very well do mission-work outside his own immediate neighborhood. The other minister was I, in Denver, from which city railroads lead into all directions. Colorado as well as Kansas in those days were parts of the Western District of our Synod. The Kansas District comprising the States of Kansas and Colorado, was organized in the summer of 1888, and the Colorado District, comprising the States of Colorado and Utah, was organized in June, 1921.

Denver, with a population in 1886 of about 85,000, was then, as it is now, a most beautiful city. The traveler from the East was then and is now completely overcome with surprise on beholding such a city after having for hundreds of miles traversed the treeless plains of Western Kansas and Nebraska and Eastern Colorado. My first object and duty was, of course, to get acquainted with the members of my church. This I did during the last four months of 1886 and the first four of 1887. At the same time I cast my eyes in a northerly and in a southerly direction. There, to the north, 106 miles from Denver, was Cheyenne with a population of about 7,000, the capital of what was then Wyoming Territory. Then, 75 miles south of Denver was Colorado Springs, with 6,000 inhabitants. 45 miles farther southward, with a population of over 20,000, was Pueblo, generally called the Pittsburgh of the West. 90 miles south of Pueblo was Trinidad, with 6,000 people. The distance from Cheyenne in the north to Trinidad in the south was 316 miles. The five cities mentioned, Denver included, all lie near the foot-hills of the eastern slope of the Rocky Mountains. I wish to state here that my work in Colorado was carried on almost ex-

clusively in the German language. I preached in Denver twice every Sunday and on the principal festival days of the year. It happened very seldom that I would be absent from the city on those days. Most of my work in the State outside of Denver was done on week-days, a few instances, which shall be spoken of in due time, excepted.

Some time in April, 1887, I had notices published in our church-papers in which I requested the readers to send me names of Lutherans if they knew of such in the cities of Cheyenne, Colorado Springs, Pueblo, and Trinidad, with the result that the name of one Lutheran in Pueblo was reported to me, a Mr. Kirchner, proprietor of the Mount Pleasant Hotel, who formerly belonged to one of our congregations in St. Louis. Him I visited, and from him I received the names of several other Lutherans in the city, rented a church-building, and advertised in the papers that on a certain evening I would preach a Lutheran sermon. The attendance that evening was about 20. Such was the beginning of our work in Pueblo. From that time on I held services in this city practically every two weeks for several years.

In looking over the records of our church in Denver, I found that services had at one time been held by my predecessor in Durango way down in the southwestern corner of the State, 450 miles from Denver, and that a Lutheran by the name of John Goeglein lived there. I wrote him of my willingness to serve him and what other Lutherans might be found there. The outcome of the correspondence was that I made a trip to Durango in June, 1887, was gone 12 days, leaving on Monday and returning on the Saturday of the following week. It was in the evening of that Monday that I left Denver on the Denver and Rio Grande Railroad, which, on leaving Denver, runs due south for 52 miles until Palmer Lake, more than 2,000 feet higher than Denver is reached; then we go down grade, through Colorado Springs, to Pueblo, then gradually up grade, in a southwesterly direction, to a small town called La Veta, 71 miles from Pueblo. Then the ascent of the famous La Veta pass is made. Where we cross the pass, the altitude is 9,398 feet. The maximum grade to the mile is 211 feet; the distance across the pass is 13 miles. It was early in the morning, before sunrise, when my train crossed this pass. We saw the clouds more than a thousand feet below us hugging the mountainsides. As soon as the descent from Veta Pass is made into the San Luis Valley, a magnificent view of Sierra Blanca of the Sangre de Christo

Range is obtained. This mountain peak, 14,464 feet above the sea, is most always dazzling white with snow; in its abysmal gorges it holds eternal reservoirs of ice. San Luis Valley or Park, as it is also called, contains 10,000 square miles, is from 7,500 to 7,800 feet above the sea, and is drained by the Rio Grande River. The trip on the Denver and Rio Grande Railroad through the San Luis Valley, about 70 miles in extent, takes us through the towns of Alamosa and Antonio. At Antonio the train again begins to climb the mountains, passes through Toltec Gorge, where 1,500 feet directly below us we behold roaring waters of the Rio de Los Pinos, and a half hour later at Cumbres, 329 miles southwest of Denver, at an altitude of 10,015 feet, we cross the Continental Divide. We are now on the Pacific Slope. From the Continental Divide to Durango the ride is down grade and takes the traveler through a most interesting country, with hills and valleys of great beauty and forests of giant evergreens. We cross and recross the Colorado-New Mexico boundary several times. Finally, after a trip of 22 hours, at 5:30 P. M., Durango is reached, a city at that time of 3,000 inhabitants and 6,520 feet above sea-level, in the beautiful and fertile valley of the Las Animas River. Mr. Goeglein was at the depot to meet me.

This man, born in Germany and reared in Pomeroy, Ohio, and confirmed there by Dr. W. Sihler, moved to Fort Wayne, Indiana, and finally settled, with his family, in Durango in the early eighties. He made me acquainted with the Lutherans and other Germans in the town which was now his home. I preached there four times on week-day evenings and twice on Sunday. While visiting the people with him one day, Mr. Goeglein told me of a man who had been a Lutheran in Germany, but who since his coming to America had in the course of time become a rank infidel. He was an invalid and had been one for a long time, was unable to be about. "We will not call on the man," Mr. Goeglein said; "it will do no good; he will just curse and use profane language and insult you." But I insisted on being introduced to this man. So we called on him. His name was Becker. Our conversation at first was on generalities, then on the man's physical condition. He had a hardened liver. He gave utterance to a few curse words and said: "I cannot understand why God, if there is a God, lets me suffer as I suffer now and have suffered so many years." "Well, sir," said I, "undoubtedly this sickness is good for you." Then he railed and, terribly excited, gesticulated with his hands and roared and said: "What! What do you mean? This sickness good for me?

How could that be? I cannot do anything. I am a constant burden to my wife. Stop talking such nonsense." "Nevertheless," said I, "I state in all seriousness that your sickness is good for you. It affords you time and opportunity to think of your spiritual welfare." "Spiritual welfare!" he said in a tone of utter derision. "All you ministers know is to talk of spiritual welfare and prayer. I for one do not believe in prayer. I did in my younger days, but I do so no more. I know positively that there is no answer to prayer. I have experienced it more than once." Then, exhausted, he leaned back in his invalid chair. After waiting a few moments, I said to him: "You just asserted that you know from your own personal experience that prayers are not heard. Mention one instance, please." He did not care to say another word; but he soon began again and told me the following: "Many years before I moved to Durango I lived in Denver. It was in the seventies. I was something of a Christian yet. In those days I was at one time on the point of purchasing a business in Black Hawk. You know where Black Hawk, that tough mining-town, is, about 40 miles west of Denver, in the mountains. There was no railroad between the two cities. I had to make the trip with horse and buggy. I started out one morning, and after I had crossed the Platte River and reached the elevation between Denver and the mountains, when I was about four miles from the city, all at once a strange presentiment came over me, a presentiment that I would break my leg and not reach my destination. You cannot imagine what mental sufferings I endured then, nor can I even begin to describe them. I immediately tied my horse to a rock which lay along the side of the road, fell down upon my knees, and prayed, and prayed most fervently, that God would protect me lest that dreaded accident occur. If ever a man prayed fervently and with sincerity of heart, that man was I. I must have been engaged in such prayer at least an hour. Finally I started out again on my trip and was very cautious, closely watching every step the horse took. All at once—it was bright daylight, about 10 o'clock—I saw something in the distance which aroused my curiosity and attracted my attention; I do not to this day know what it was. My eyes were just riveted on it. Suddenly the two right wheels of my buggy dropped down into a deep rut in the road; the buggy turned over, fell on me, and broke my leg just above the knee; the horse broke loose and ran away. There I was on the open prairie about seven miles from Denver. I lay there all day in utmost

misery and pain. Toward evening a stranger came along who was driving in the direction of Denver and who took me to town and placed me into a hospital. It was several months before I was able to be about again." He concluded by saying, "There you have the proof." "Proof for what?" asked I. "Why can you not see? Proof that praying does no good, that prayers are not answered," he replied most indignantly. "But," said I, "the fact that your prayer in this instance was not answered, the fact that you met with that dreaded accident, was of benefit to you without doubt; it may have saved your life. Tell me, what kind of business was it that you had intended to buy in Black Hawk?" "Why," said he, somewhat surprised at my question, "it was an honorable business, strictly honorable. I intended to buy a hotel that was for sale; and if I had succeeded in making the purchase, I would have made loads of money, for in those days things were booming up there." "Well," said I, "was there any one else besides you that was trying to get that business?" "Why," said he, "you seem to know something about this affair." "No," I stated, "not any more than I have learned from you just now. I have not been in Colorado more than ten months. Came from Ohio. But tell me, was there any one else anxious to get possession of that hotel business?" "Yes," he replied. "Who was it?" "Another man." "What kind of man was he?" "A man that had a very bad reputation. A man that would do anything to gain his point. But you seem to know all about this matter." "As I said just a minute ago," I rejoined, "I know no more about it than what I hear from you. But there are many possibilities that must be taken into consideration and that might throw some light on why the good Lord permitted you to break your leg on that fatal trip. Are you certain that you would not have been murdered by the other party if you had succeeded in your attempt to purchase that business and he had failed to get it?" This question stunned him, and with an expression of horror in his face, he sank back in his invalid-chair and remained speechless for some time.

I resumed the conversation after a few moments, however, and said: "Do you not think that the breaking of your leg at that time saved your life? God does not always answer prayers at the time when we would have Him do it nor in the manner in which we desire, but in such manner and at such time as He sees will be of the greatest benefit to us." He would not make a direct reply to my question but said: "I will tell you something else, something

that happened to me since I have lived in Durango. Some years ago I had gone to Alamosa in the San Luis Valley, about 200 miles east of Durango. You know there is but one train a day from Denver through Alamosa to Durango. The train, you know, leaves Alamosa in the morning and arrives at Durango in the evening. I had some business with a farmer six miles from Alamosa. This man insisted on my staying overnight with him and promised to have me at the depot in good time in the morning. My watch had stopped, and I set it by the clock in his home, which, as I found out the next day, was 25 minutes late. On the morning he drove me to the town, and as we were three fourths of a mile from the depot, we saw the train pull out for Durango. My anger at having missed it knew no bounds; I raved like a madman. About 3 o'clock that afternoon a telegram reached Alamosa with the information the very train I had missed left the track and fell down the chasm at Toltac Gorge, but was caught by the giant trees about 50 feet below the track. No one was killed, but most of the passengers were more or less seriously injured with broken limbs and the like. When I heard this news, I began to feel ashamed of my actions and became extremely grateful that I had missed that train." "You see," said I, "that God works in a mysterious way His wonders to perform." Having spoken a few more words to him, I told him that I must now leave as Mr. Goeglein and I wished to call on a few more people to invite them to the services that were to be held that evening. I told him also that, God willing, I intended to be in Durango again the latter part of November, at which time I would call on him, too, if he permitted. He gave me a hearty handshake and said: "Yes, by all means visit me whenever you come to our town."

On our way through the town I asked Mr. Goeglein whether he knew of any other Lutherans in the county. He told me there were several families, farmers, in the valley of the Pine River, about 25 miles east of Durango. He volunteered to take me to them if I did not mind traveling in a farm-wagon, as that was the only way in which he was able to get me there. I gladly accepted his offer. We started out the next morning, traveled up grade for about 7 miles through vast pine forests, then down grade again 6 miles, crossed the Florida River (the i in Florida is pronounced like ee in see and is accented), then up another mountainside for about 6 miles, then down about 4 miles into the Pine River Valley. A few more miles brought us into the home of one of the settlers,

who received us with great joy. The next day we visited three Lutheran families in the valley and a few single persons, one a Lutheran cowboy about 30 years old, a college graduate come to this part of Colorado for his health. The following day in the evening I preached to 14 persons, told the people I would come again in November, get off at Ignacio station, 25 miles east of Durango, where they should have some one to meet me and take me up into their settlement, which was 16 miles north of the station, up the Pine River, through 12 miles of the Southern Ute Indian Reservation and four miles farther through the land settled by the whites. They agreed to do this. The next day Mr. Goeglein and I returned to Durango. After having conducted services again that evening in the city, I left the following morning for Denver, which was reached in safety the next morning.

In September, on a Monday, I went to Leadville, 10,200 feet above the sea, 150 miles directly west of Denver via the nearest railroad. Leadville is the largest mining-camp in the State and had 25,000 inhabitants at the time. Now it is very much smaller. I was there four days, looked up the German Lutherans, preached twice to about 30 adults, and returned home.

On November 18 I went to Durango the second time. I had by mail requested the people in the Pine River district to meet me at Ignacio station, as was agreed upon in June; but as there was no one at the depot when the train pulled in, I went on to Durango and preached there on the evenings of Thursday and Friday to from 18 to 40 people. I also called on Mr. Becker again. He was a changed man. He called my attention to a Bible on his table. To my question whether I should read to him from it, he replied immediately in the affirmative. I read to him such portions of Holy Writ as best suited his case, spoke of sin, redemption, the Redeemer, repentance, forgiveness of sins, granted of God to such as truly repent of their sins and trust with childlike faith in the sin-cleansing power of the blood of Christ, and then recited the explanation of the second article of our Creed, in which he joined of his own accord, emphasizing the words "I," "my," and "me." A few months later he departed this life trusting in the Savior of mankind, as Mr. Goeglein, who at my request visited him quite often during the winter months, informed me in February of the following year.

On my arrival on Tuesday evening I had immediately written post cards to the people in Pine River Valley, informing them that

I would be at Ignacio station on Saturday morning and requesting that some one meet me there at that time so that I could hold services for them on Sunday in the schoolhouse. But when I reached the station in question, no one was there to receive me. An assistant of the Indian agent, who had gone to the station for supplies, kindly permitted me to ride with him to the agency about 2 miles from the station. I took dinner there and waited several hours for some one from the settlement. It was ten miles from the agency through the Indian reservation to the white settlement. At 2 P. M. I told the agent, who was a German, from Wuerttemberg, by the name of Stolsteimer, that I intended to start out afoot. He opposed this most strenuously and said: "You will never get there if you go afoot; you have the Pine River to ford, and you cannot possibly cross it afoot. If you insist on going, take my saddle-horse and ride. When you reach the settlement, just fasten the bridle to the saddle and turn the horse loose, and he will come back to the agency." I took his advice; by 5 o'clock I reached the northern border of the reservation and turned the horse loose. Then I walked four miles, all up grade, through wet snow, some six inches deep, and finally, about 7 P. M., reached the house where Mr. Goeglein and I had been so hospitably received in June. I knocked at the door. The lady of the house opened and quickly stepped back, horrified, then cried to her husband: "The minister," and to me: "Where in all the world do you come from?" I then told them of my having written to them two weeks ago from Denver and four days ago from Durango. But I learned from them that no one had received any mail from me. The next day toward evening my host rode to the post-office to make inquiry about this matter and was given the mail in question. Those people in those days did not go to the post-office very often, sometimes not for weeks.

While the lady of the house was preparing supper for me, I requested my host by all means early the next morning, Sunday, to inform all the people that at 11 A. M. there would be services in the schoolhouse and, if I did not wake up myself, to wake me no later than 7 A. M. At 8 P. M. I retired, completely tired out. The next morning, when I awoke, I looked at my watch and saw it was 11 A. M. I was indignant. I asked my host: "Why did you not wake me at seven?" He took me to the door and said: "Just look out there and see how everything is frozen stiff. No one could venture out with a horse in this kind of weather. And the reason, Pastor, why we did not wake you up at the time set by you

was that, as no services could be held today on account of the weather, and as you were so worn out last night, we decided to let you sleep as long as you could. It is beginning to moderate now; by tonight the snow will begin to melt, and tomorrow morning we will notify the people that there will be services at 11 A. M. You can then get back to Durango to preach there tomorrow night." I had previously told them that I had announced services in Durango for Monday night.

On Monday services were held in the schoolhouse at the time set. There were 14 adults present, four of whom were English Americans. After I had preached in German, the English people begged me to preach in English also. I was in no wise prepared for this, had no English Bible with me, and the people had none. What was to be done? I took my German Bible, translated from it my German text, and preached the same sermon in English in a somewhat abbreviated form. I hardly ever had a more attentive audience. After the services I went with that one of the German families whose farm joined the reservation on the road to Ignacio. We reached the house about 1 P. M.

One of their boys, a lad about sixteen, was to take me to the station after dinner. We were to go horseback. These people, I knew, were very slow-going. I asked whether the horses which we were to ride were in readiness. "No, not yet," they said. "Where are they?" "In the field." "Well," said I, "it is best to have them sought and brought into the barn before we eat." "No," said they, "we will eat first and then the boy can catch them." I said: "No; I will not eat until I see the horses caught and in the barn." They tried to prevail on me to eat first, but I refused. After a few minutes they sent the boy out to get the horses. I stood at the window and watched him. Finally at about 1:45 P. M. he succeeded in catching and saddling them. When he came into the house, we ate. Thirty minutes later the boy and I were on the road to Ignacio. We reached the agency shortly before 4 o'clock. There we witnessed a genuine Indian war-dance, which was being conducted under the supervision of the agent, who, if the Indians would get too wild, would terminate it. At 4:30 we reached the station, and the boy returned home. After he was gone, I bought my ticket, and the depot agent told me the train was three hours late. This would put me into Durango at 9 P. M. instead of 6 P. M. And we were to have services at 7:30. I imagined the people would all go home. But how surprised was I when at my ar-

rival in Durango at 9:15 P.M. Mr. Goeglein, who met me at the depot, told me that about 40 people were in the church patiently waiting for me to come and preach! I had my supper that night about 10:45. After having preached two more times that week, I on Friday morning left for my home in Denver.

It was a beautiful day. The sun shone in all his glory. I heard some old-timers on the train say that they expected a furious snow-storm before noon. The train had passed through Ignacio after having crossed the watershed between the Florida and Pine rivers. Clouds were seen gathering in the east. The Pine River behind us, we crossed the watershed between it and the Piedra River, traveling a distance of about 20 miles and reaching ever-increasing altitudes as we proceeded eastward. The clouds came down from the mountainsides and settled on the heights of land between the two rivers last mentioned. Out of the bright sunshine the train entered these clouds, and for about 15 minutes it was as dark as it is in the Loop district of Chicago during a pouring rain. Then came another sunny stretch, but only for a few moments, for we passed through another cloud. We were now 7,500 feet above the sea. A little later on, it began to snow. The snow-storm increased in fury as we continued to reach greater heights. The cuts began to fill with snow, and we saw Mexicans clearing these cuts, so that the train would experience less difficulty in its laborious climb. We crossed the Continental Divide at 2:45 in the afternoon and passed through the short tunnel at Toltec Gorge at an altitude of 9,465 feet, and, lo, before us lay the great San Luis Valley and in the distance, 100 miles to the northeast, the majestic Sangre de Christo Range with Mont Blanc as its southern extremity. The sun, which had been shining in the valley all day, was just setting. Viewed from the heights of Toltec Gorge, the valley appeared like a vast ocean of blood, caused by the setting sun shining on the snow and ice on the Sangre de Christo Range. For this reason this range is called Sangre de Christo, that is, Blood of Christ. The next morning at 7 o'clock I arrived in Denver.

(To be continued)

The Missouri Synod in Northwestern Ohio

By the REV. GEORGE MAASSEL, Napoleon, O.

V

The Lord gave the Word; great was the company of those that published it.
Ps. 68:11

1884 — 1904

From 1864 to 1884 the Church had been firmly established in Northwestern Ohio. The congregations had grown sufficiently in membership to insure their stability. There had been added also an adequate number of pastors to supply in ever greater measure the needs of the congregations. During the next twenty years there was continuous and rapid growth in most of the congregations. The stream of immigration continued, and the first native-born generation established itself with the old and the new immigrants. Here and there a measure of wealth was achieved. Gradually the drainage system, which hitherto had been somewhat haphazard, was extended farther and farther into the black swamp, and highly fertile areas were opened for settlement, while the older land rose in value and became ever more productive.

From these physical improvements also the Church drew affluence and strength and made progress. A more abundant income made possible an increase in the number of pastors, and this, in turn, improved the educational work of the Church. Lack of schools and of thorough indoctrination had been the bane of pioneer days. This condition, coupled with other failings, had earned Northwestern Ohio the questionable title of *die schwarze Ecke*. In 1884 only two congregations in the northern counties could boast a genuine parochial school: St. John's, Defiance, which had a teacher as early as 1862, and Trinity, Toledo. All the other congregations had to be content with whatever instruction the pastor, who usually served more than one congregation, could give. Now, as the physical conditions, particularly also the roads, improved, more time and effort could be devoted to schools, and in most of the congregations schools of a sort, conducted by the pastor, who in some instances was assisted by a student or other helper, became the rule.

Advisedly they are called "schools of a sort." In some cases the value of the school was recognized by pastor and people, and worth-while results were obtained. In other instances undue emphasis was laid on the fact that they were "German" schools, and consequently the religious features were too easily lost sight of,

if not by the pastor, at least by some of the people. Undoubtedly also some schools were conducted with little appreciation of their purpose and their value. The school term was frequently arranged to suit the convenience of the membership. Clearing the land still required the muscles of every able-bodied member of the family, and the children could be "spared" for school only a few months of the year. Thus, with the improvements which these years brought, there was also here and there sown a seed of careless indifference, which brought forth tares that were later to plague pastors and people.

The first increase in the number of pastors occurred when St. John's, Michaelis, and St. Peter's, Florida, became an independent parish. Its first resident pastor was Theo. Horst, who was ordained and installed on the 12th Sunday after Trinity, 1885, by Pastor G. M. Zucker. He served the Florida parish about three years and then removed to Ashland, Kentucky. His successor was Pastor W. Schust, who was inducted into office the 25th Sunday after Trinity, 1888, by Pastor W. L. Fischer.

At this time also two congregations were added in this territory. One was Trinity, Elmore, Ottawa County, which since its founding in 1866 had been affiliated with the Ohio Synod. During this period it had been served by four pastors of that synod: G. Cronenwett, 1866—1869, P. Graetz, 1869—1875, L. Althoff, 1876—1885, and G. Keasel, 1885—1887. On January 1, 1888, Trinity severed its connection with the Ohio Synod and applied for a pastor from the Missouri Synod. The convention of the Central District in 1888 voted to support Trinity at Elmore to the extent of \$100. Candidate G. J. F. Koch was ordained and installed the 11th Sunday after Trinity, 1888, by Pastor H. W. Querl.

In Toledo a second congregation, Immanuel, was organized by Pastor Querl on March 11, 1888, with eight charter members. It was immediately resolved to erect a building to serve as both church and school, and already July 1, 1888, this structure could be dedicated to the service of the Triune God. President Niemann of the Central District preached the dedicatory sermon. July 8 the congregation voted to affiliate with the Missouri Synod. It was duly received into membership at the Central District convention which met July 25—31, 1888, at Evansville, Indiana. The convention voted \$200 support for Immanuel Congregation. On the 8th Sunday after Trinity Candidate C. Strasen was duly ordained and installed as its first pastor. He immediately opened a Christian

day-school. Although the beginnings of Immanuel had been most auspicious, the little flock was soon involved in almost insurmountable financial difficulties. The congregation permitted its pastor to accept a call to St. Thomas's, Van Wert County, in the spring of 1889, after he had served Immanuel for only nine months. The school was closed, and the congregation had to look to its founder, Pastor Querl, for pastoral ministrations. Thoroughly discouraged, the congregation considered disbanding. However, the Central District, in its convention at Indianapolis, April 25 to May 1, 1889, voted to continue the support of \$200 if Immanuel should decide to call a pastor again. The convention, however, reserved the right for its Mission Board to advise and to license the calling of a pastor. A year later, on the 7th Sunday after Trinity, 1890, the second pastor of Immanuel, Pastor F. Sell, was installed by Pastor Querl. But again the congregation's joy soon was turned into sorrow. Their pastor became ill and died of tuberculosis November 5, 1891, at the early age of twenty-seven years. Because of his illness Mr. H. C. Siegert, student of theology, had been engaged as assistant.

Two more congregations, which later again passed out of existence, were at this time added to the list of Missouri Synod churches through the efforts of Pastor Adam Detzer, the pioneer in Northwestern Ohio. One of these congregations has a unique history, although it never assumed any real importance. The date of its organization and at what time a church was erected cannot be established from available records. It was located in Damascus Township and was sometimes associated with the village of Texas, but later with the village of McClure. This community had been visited by Detzer as early as 1848. When Henry Koenig came to Henry County and resided in Texas, he served this settlement until his departure to Auglaize County. After Koenig a Pastor Kleingees of Perrysburg, Ohio, served the settlement for five years. The latter was succeeded by a Pastor Koehler of the Iowa Synod for one year. Koehler, in turn, was succeeded by a Pastor Kaempflein, whose synodical affiliations are not of record. While Pastor Kaempflein was still serving the congregation, a schism occurred, and one party invited Pastor Karrer of Napoleon to serve them. The chronicle of the congregation by the pen of Pastor Detzer reports that an expensive but unnecessary lawsuit was waged for the possession of the church. Presumably the Missouri faction won, for upon the departure of Karrer from Napoleon, Detzer again

served the congregation from Defiance for a short time. When Pastor Dulitz was established in Napoleon, he took charge of the work near Texas, but it seems that he soon left the little flock to its own fate. Again the congregation passed into the keeping of pastors of the Iowa Synod, being served in turn by Pastor S. Kuesthardt of Custar, Ohio, by Pastor Theo. Meier of Waterville, Ohio, and finally by Pastor G. Hueter of Custar, Ohio.

But when Pastor Detzer had come to Holgate, the Damascus Township folk returned to their "first love." In 1886 they appealed to Pastor Detzer again to become their pastor. He found only a few of the members whom he had first served in 1848 and then again for a short time in 1871. Some had moved away, others had fallen away, no longer attending divine services and not even having their children baptized. But a few families eagerly received the ministration of Pastor Detzer. May 22, 1887, he confirmed a class of eight, and at the Communion service 44 persons appeared as guests at the Lord's Supper.

About midway between Holgate and Damascus Township another settlement had come into being, where Pastor G. Hueter of the Iowa Synod had organized a congregation in the midst of a swamp, giving it the significant name *Hoffnungsgemeinde*. It was founded in 1879. Pastor Detzer now went a few miles beyond Hope Congregation into Monroe Township and organized St. Paul's Congregation. Thus Pastor Detzer again had three congregations in a line in Henry County, exactly as he had them forty years before in Williams County. In Holgate St. John's Congregation had erected a parsonage for him at a cost of about \$700.

But Pastor Detzer's days in the active ministry were numbered. Before he was relieved of his charge, however, he who had dedicated or had helped dedicate so many churches in Northwestern Ohio was to witness the destruction of the last church in which he served. July 3, 1888, lightning struck St. John's Church, Holgate, and the edifice was completely consumed by the flames. The next morning, so it is reported, two children, aged nine and eleven, appeared at the parsonage and offered Pastor Detzer all their meager savings towards the erection of a new church.

But Pastor Detzer was not to minister in the new church. The *Buschpfarrer*, as Loehe had dubbed Detzer upon his departure for America in 1845, had been unable to adapt himself to the more sedate life which the clearing of the woods brought about. His

free-and-easy conduct, which had won him the hearts of so many of the pioneer settlers but which had finally led to his resignation in Defiance in 1872, now created difficulties in Holgate also. He became a problem child for synodical officials. It is reliably reported that Pastor Detzer severed his membership in the Missouri Synod to escape admonition and correction from the brethren. But St. John's, Holgate, was not willing to be served by a pastor who had withdrawn from Synod. It called Pastor W. Schust of Florida to become their pastor in addition to his two congregations at Florida.

Thus Pastor Adam Detzer ceased to be a minister in good standing. It was a tragic ending of the heroic labors of this pioneer. He had given, exactly as he had promised Pfarrer Loehe, his all to the planting of the Church in Northwestern Ohio. Possibly among the founders of the Missouri Synod Pastor Detzer was singular in that he labored so unselfishly and so long in so hard and so difficult and so unpromising a field as that in this section of Ohio. Today there are eighteen congregations of the Missouri Synod in the four northwestern counties of Ohio as a living monument of what God wrought through the humble efforts of Adam Detzer. In addition he had given three sons to serve as ministers of the Missouri Synod. After the break had occurred, Pastor Detzer pleaded that he be reinstated. What appears to have been the final official statement of the Central District in Detzer's case is a brief paragraph in the Report of the Central District, convened in Cleveland, Ohio, August 1—7, 1894. "*In Sachen des Herrn Pastor A. Detzer, sen.* Nachdem die Synode den Bericht der Committee in dieser Angelegenheit gehoert hatte, beschloss sie, Herrn Pastor A. Detzer seine vormalige Versuendigung zu vergeben, mit seinem Aufnahmegesuch in die Synode ihn aber an den Illinois-Distrikt zu verweisen."

So far as available records indicate, Pastor Detzer did not again hold a pastorate of a congregation, but he had made his peace with the Synod of which he had been a charter member and served as occasional preacher wherever and whenever his services were requested. Particularly did he delight to visit his former haunts in Northwestern Ohio. When St. Stephen's, South Ridge, celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of its founding on the 2d Sunday after Trinity, 1903, Pastor Adam Detzer was one of the festival preachers. His death occurred before the end of that year. The *Statistical Year-Book* of 1903 contains two entries concerning his

decease. In the report of the President of the Illinois District we find this item: "Ausgeschieden durch einen seligen Tod: Pastor Adam Detzer. Er starb am 24. November im Alter von 86 Jahren und 21 Tagen." Under the necrology of that year is the notice: "Pastor Johann Adam Detzer, born November 3, 1817, in Weidenberg, near Bayreuth, Bavaria. Died at Niles Center, Illinois, November 24, 1903. He was in office 58 years." No other notice, as far as is known to the writer, was made of his passing in any publication of Synod. His labors, however, cannot and should not be ignored, and so these articles in the *CONCORDIA HISTORICAL INSTITUTE QUARTERLY* may serve as a humble memorial to Pastor Adam Detzer, Sr.

Pastor Schust was inducted into office at St. John's, Holgate, the 2d Sunday in Advent, 1889, by Pastor W. L. Fischer. He also continued to serve St. Peter's, Florida, and St. John's Michaelis. This arrangement gave the Holgate congregation much needed aid toward the erection of a new church. June 29, 1890, the new St. John's Church, 56×34 feet, erected at a cost of \$2,400, was dedicated. The festival speakers were Pastors Boese, Querl, and C. F. W. Meyer, the last-named preaching in English. The other two congregations served by Pastor Detzer, one in Damascus Township, the other in Monroe Township, again dropped from the list of Missouri Synod congregations, being served for several years by Pastor L. Dammann (Ohio Synod) of Napoleon.

In the summer of 1890 Pastor C. Boese was called to Concord, Wisconsin, and Pastor H. Diemer, who had removed from this territory in 1883, returned to become pastor of St. Stephen's. He was installed by Pastor G. M. Zucker on the 20th Sunday after Trinity, 1890. Exactly one year later St. Stephen's dedicated a spacious new church, 36×70 feet, with a 95-foot tower. The festival preachers were Prof. F. Zucker of Fort Wayne, Pastor G. M. Zucker, Pastor E. Juengel of Florida, and Pastor C. F. W. Meyer, the last again preaching in the English language.

Meanwhile the Florida parish had resumed its independence. Pastor Schust relinquished the field to devote himself entirely to St. John's, Holgate, and on the 17th Sunday after Trinity, 1891, he installed Candidate E. Juengel as his successor in the Florida parish.

In the Sherwood-Edgerton parish Pastor Hunziker was succeeded in 1890 by Pastor E. A. Sieving, and a year later the latter

was succeeded by Candidate L. J. F. Going, who was ordained and installed by his predecessor on the 15th Sunday after Trinity, 1891.

About this time Immanuel in Toledo made another effort to live. Student of Theology H. C. Siegert served the congregation until the arrival of the new pastor, F. Reinking, who was inducted into office on Quinquagesima Sunday, 1892, by Pastor H. Steger. But he, too, remained with Immanuel only a little more than one year. A number of changes in Henry and Fulton counties prepared the way for the removal of Pastor Reinking from Toledo. Pastor Henry Steger removed from St. James's, Fulton Co., and St. John's, Ridgeville Township, in 1892 to Baldwin Township, Allegheny Co., Pennsylvania. He was succeeded by Pastor E. Wilder, who was installed the 18th Sunday after Trinity, 1892, by Pastor A. Wilder of Wapakoneta. St. John's, Ridgeville Township, now decided to sever its connection with St. James's, Fulton Co., and call its own pastor. Its choice was Pastor Reinking of Toledo, and he was inducted into office on the 12th Sunday after Trinity, 1893, by Pastor E. Wilder.

(To be continued)

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